

REVIEWING POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE CHERRY POINT PROPOSAL

It is common practice for the sponsor of a proposed project to provide the funds for the studies needed by and conducted for the federal and state permitting agencies. SSA Marine’s proposed development at Cherry Point is no different. Technical, legal, communications and public education support, and time and staff resources are needed to properly review and evaluate large-scale commercial proposals, and associated potential impacts and mitigation measures. These necessary items all cost money.

During the March 30, 2011 meeting, the Lummi Cherry Point Team notified SSA Marine that the Lummi Nation initially needed \$400,000 to offset the costs for Lummi to review and evaluate the proposed project. Lummi also indicated that additional funding support would be needed in the future as the environmental review process evolved. SSA Marine noted that they were already funding studies being conducted under the direction of the Washington Department of Ecology, the Army Corps of Engineers and Whatcom County, and agreed that helping to pay for Lummi’s evaluation costs would be no different.

The Cherry Point Team informed the Lummi General Council about this initial \$400,000 in funding and how it was going to be used during the June 2011 Annual Fishers meeting and again during special General Council meetings in October 2011 and February 2012. Among the considerations being evaluated is whether it is even possible for SSA Marine to mitigate for unavoidable impacts associated with the proposed Gateway Pacific Terminal.

These funds enable the Lummi Nation to be fully prepared and actively participate in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be conducted to evaluate the impacts of the proposed project on the human environment.

The Lummi Nation has the nearest reservation to Cherry Point, the largest fishing fleet and catches more salmon and shellfish from the marine waters near Cherry Point than all of the other federally recognized Indian tribes in Puget Sound combined.

Lummi cultural properties are located on and adjacent to the proposed development site. Consequently, if built, the Lummi Nation and its members will be the Indian tribe most impacted by SSA Marine’s proposed development.

LUMMI IS CONDUCTING OUR OWN RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Use of the SSA Marine funding is restricted to costs directly related to evaluations and meetings related to the proposed development, and must not influence any decisions that need to be made.

Last year SSA Marine mounted a campaign to gain support for its proposed development from local governments, elected leaders and the general public. The Lummi Nation refused to rubber stamp SSA Marine’s proposal, but rather insisted that SSA Marine provide the financial resources to conduct our own research to inform the Lummi Indian Business Council and enrolled members.

The Lummi Cherry Point Team identified five principles to govern the use of the funding. These principles and associated short-term action plan, allocation plan and administration plan were approved by the Lummi Indian Business Council. The primary principle governing the use of the money is that the funding must not influence the outcome of the evaluation or any negotiations. The funding support is intended to offset the evaluation costs and ensure that the Lummi Nation has the resources to support knowledge-based decisions related to the proposed development.

HOW ARE THE FUNDS BEING USED?

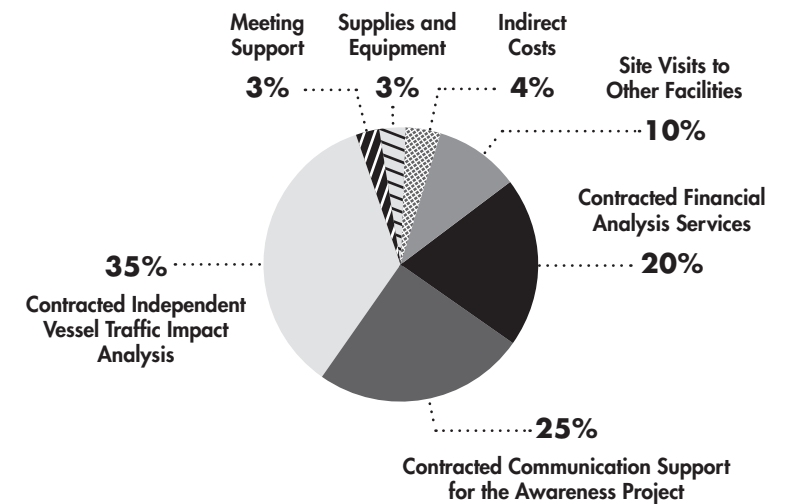
The members of the Lummi Indian Business Council appointed Cherry Point Team are already busy, and the project evaluation has significantly increased their workload. Consequently, some of the funding is being used to contract with qualified consultants to provide support services or specialized expertise.

THE FUNDS HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FOR WORK THAT INCLUDES:

- Obtaining an independent evaluation of a vessel traffic study
- Providing internal and external community education support
- Developing financial analysis of the proposed project
- Visiting existing bulk goods export facilities, including coal export facilities
- Communications support for the Awareness Project

The new Awareness Project website is still under construction, but please keep an eye out for it at www.lummi-nsn.gov.

In next month’s Squol Quol, the Awareness Project will focus on the vessel traffic study.



“The Lummi Nation and its members rely on land at Cherry Point and the adjacent marine waters for commercial, ceremonial and subsistence fisheries necessary to perpetuate the Lummi schelangen,”

– Lummi’s Natural Resource Director, Merle Jefferson
The Bellingham Herald, Dec. 5.